

# Liberty-Booker T Washington District Timeline of Major Sites and Leaders

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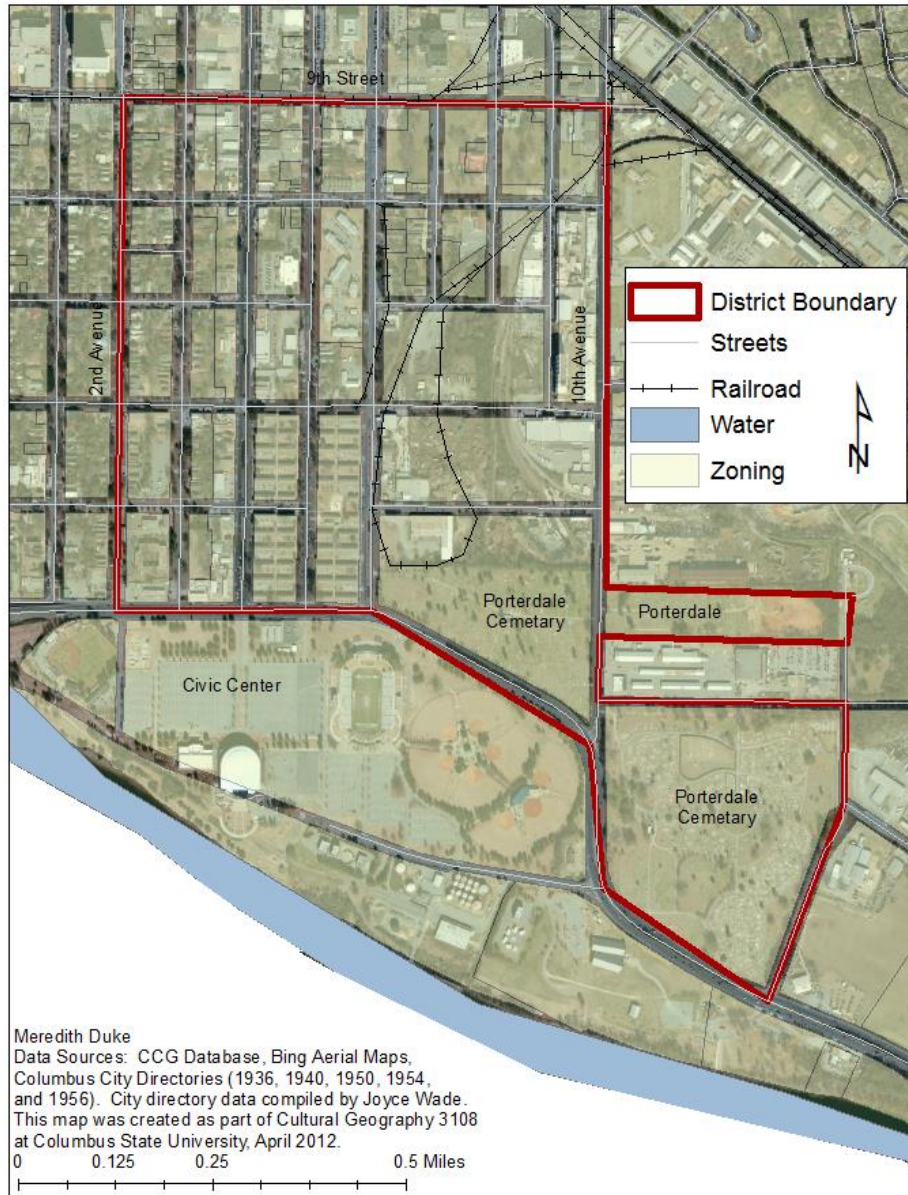
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# Liberty - East Commons District Map

## Muscogee County, Georgia, April 2012



1858



## Porterdale Cemetery

- African American Cemetery in Columbus

# 1886



## Holsey Chapel CME Church

- Held a significant role in the Civil Rights Movement as a meeting place
- During the 1960s Reverend Edward D. Bryson fought to desegregate the public bus system
- During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, began broadcasting worship services on the radio and providing food for those in need



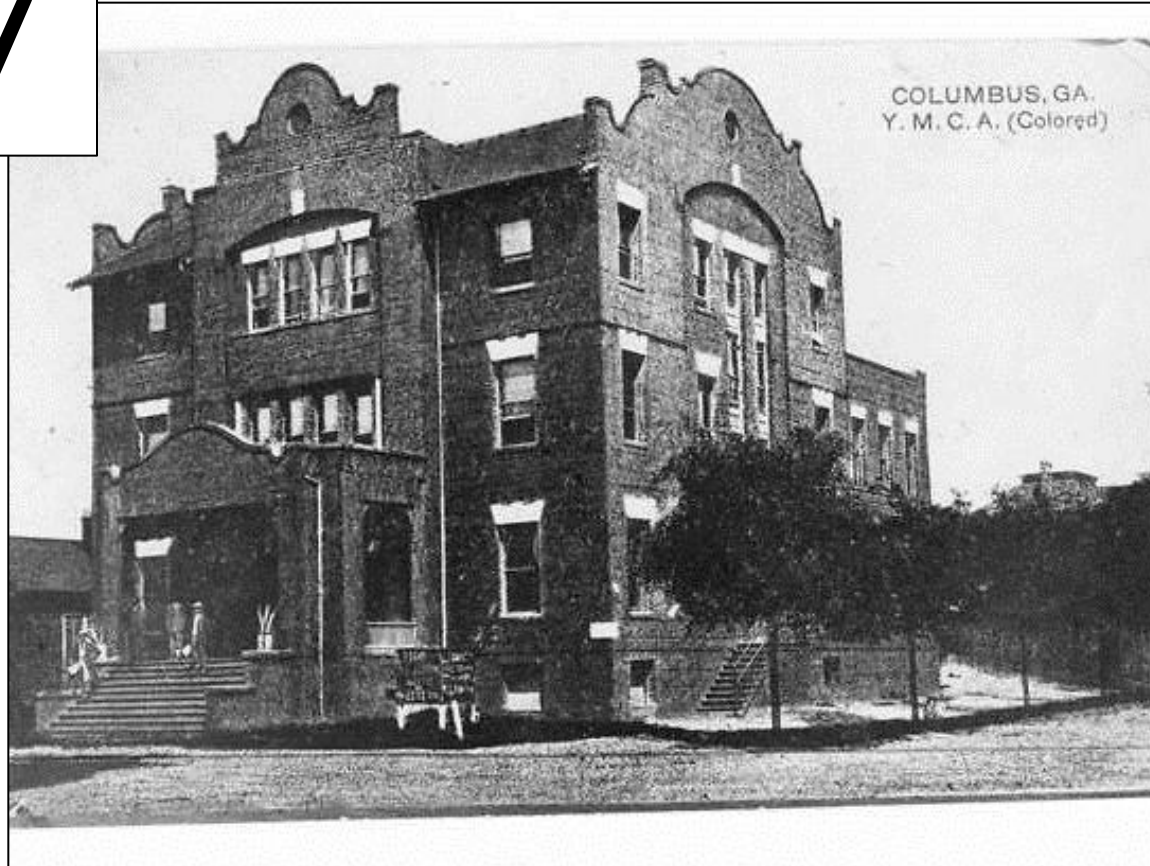
# 1897



## Friendship Baptist Church

- Ma Rainey was a parishioner in the Church and sang in the choir until her death in 1939
- Hosted various events in the promotion of Civil Rights

# 1907



## Colored YMCA

- Predominately funded by George Foster Peabody
- Booker T. Washington spoke at the dedication in 1907
- A significant portion of funds were raised by Black residents in Columbus
- Provided lodging during World War II for Black Soldiers

# 1908



## **Fifth Avenue School**

- Located at 627 Fifth Avenue
- Served as a secondary education for Blacks in the district until Spencer High was built in 1930 and was converted in an elementary school
- Closed in 1978 by the Muscogee County School District following desegregation



# 1915

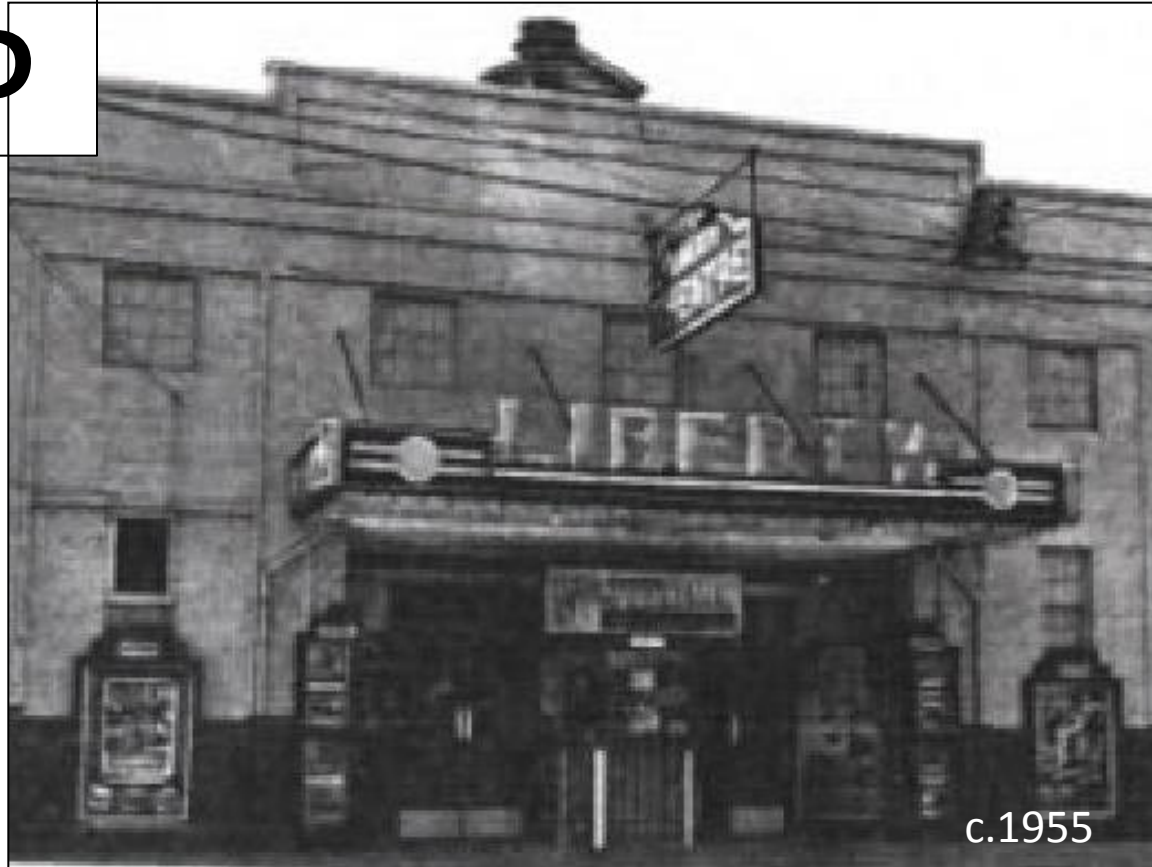


## First African Baptist Church

- Held carnivals, fish fries, and sold ice cream during the Great Depression
- Susie Sconiers, a prominent member of the community, was a parishioner of the church
- During the 1940s, began the first Boy and Girl Scout troops for African American children in Muscogee County
- Held funeral of Thomas Brewer, a civil rights activist who was assassinated in 1956
- Sponsor a Women's Day program annually



# 1925



## Liberty Theater

- Erected by Roy Martin, local white movie theater owner in 1924
- Housed a 600 seat auditorium with attached concession stand
- Severed as a movie, music and vaudeville theater for the tri-city area

# 1935



## Ma Rainey House Museum

- Ma Rainey purchased this home in 1935 where she lived until her death in 1939
- Attended Friendship Baptist Church where she sang in the Choir
- The City of Columbus purchased the house in 1995 and began a 10 year renovation project
- Several fundraising projects were hosted to raise money for the renovation including a concert where legendary B.B. King performed

# 1936



## Sconiers Buiding

- Located on the corner of Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, the “Magic Corner” in East Commons
- Office building for Black professionals such as doctors, lawyers and insurance agents with offices on the first two floors of the building developed by John L. Sconiers, Sr.
- Third floor consisted of an auditorium and served as a meeting place for fraternal organizations and other social functions



# 1937



## **Fourth Street Missionary Baptist Church**

- Had significant growth in the 1960s and 1970s as its budget increased from around \$20,000 in 1963 to about \$180,000 in 1980
- During the 1980s, began a radio ministry and lawn care and maid services
- Currently involved in a prison reform ministry, a recovery program for addicts, and an affordable housing program

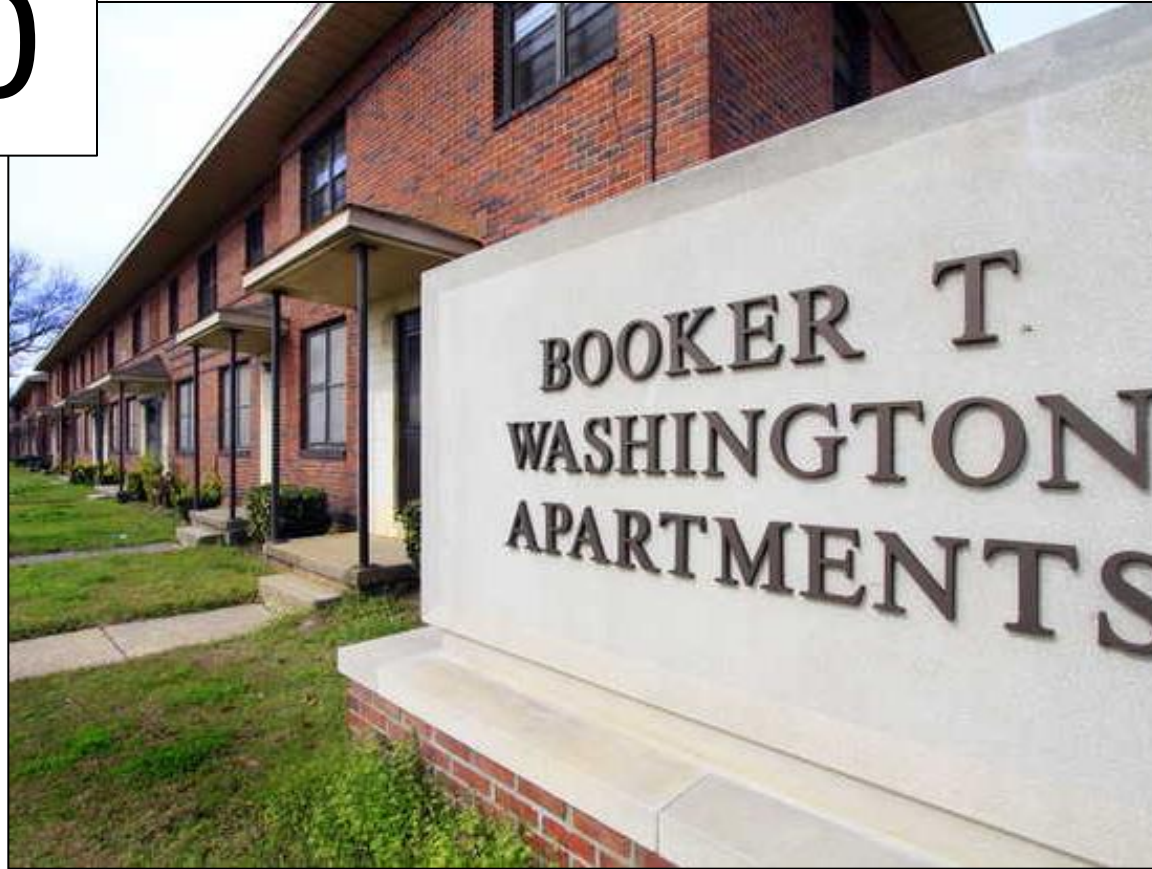
# 1939



## Gertrude 'Ma' Rainey

- Gertrude 'Ma' Rainey is buried between her two sisters in Porterdales Cemetery

# 1940



## **Booker T. Washington Apartments**

- 1, 2, & 3 Bedroom with 1 Bath units including water, electric, and gas utilities
- 392 Units ranging from \$10.56 to \$11.80 per month when minimum wage was \$0.43 per hour
- Scheduled for demolition beginning in 2014



# 1941



## **Fifth Avenue USO**

- The first USO for Black soldiers in the United States
- Elizabeth Lunsford provided more than three quarters of the necessary funding for the project
- The Army provided bus transportation for Black soldiers from Fort Benning to the USO
- Jackie Robinson visited the USO

# 1941



## **Mildred Lane Terry**

- First school trained librarian in Muscogee County
- Librarian at Spencer High School
- First Librarian at Forth Avenue Public Library in 1953

# 1942



## Black Soldiers

- Black Military Police served as Courtesy Patrols in Black Columbus
- Black Military Police were first assigned to Fort Benning in 1942



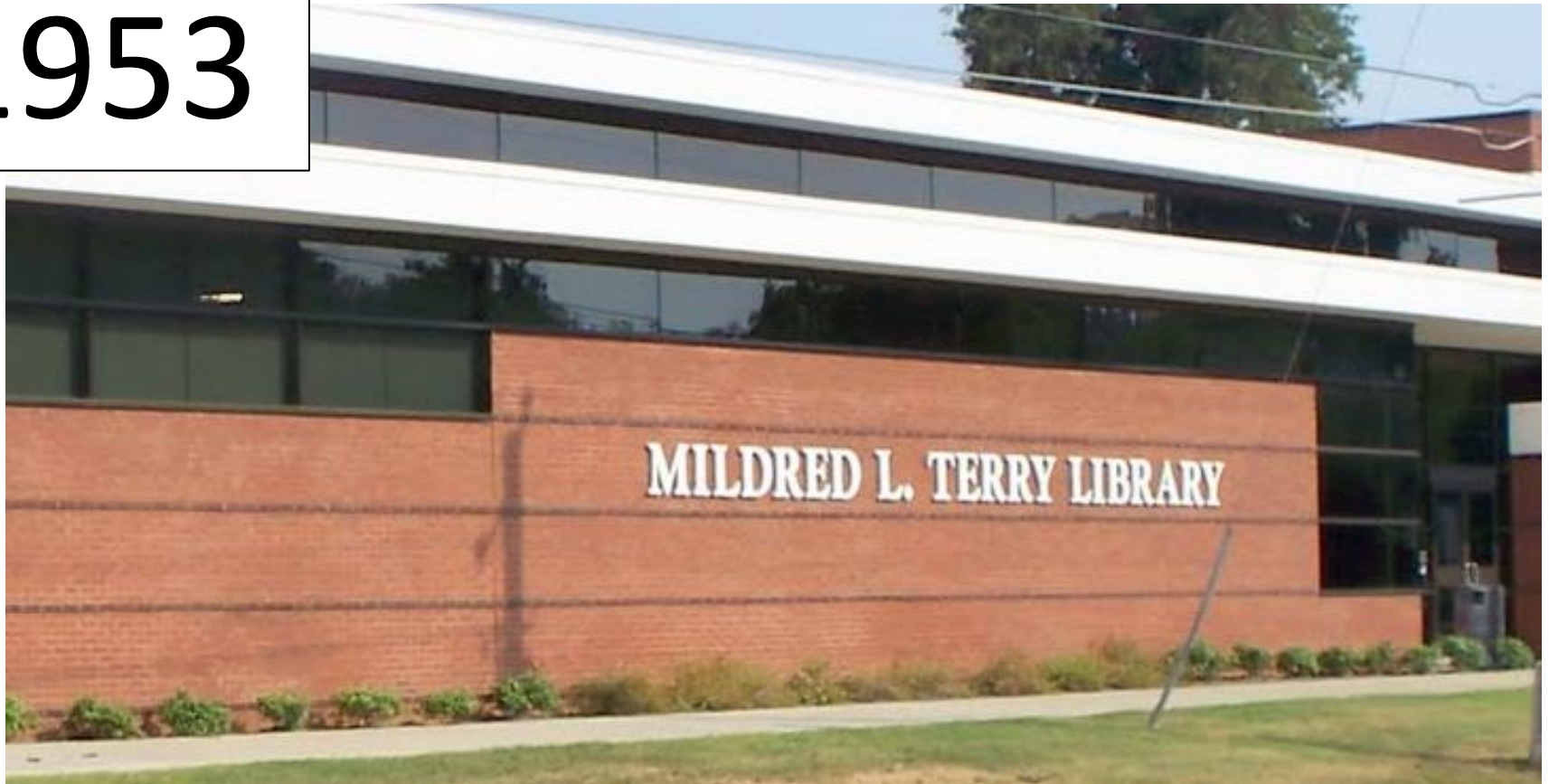
# 1944



## Black Soldiers

- Black Soldiers from Fort Benning enjoyed Columbus' sights

# 1953



## **Fourth Avenue Public Library**

- Opened in 1953 with Mildred L. Terry as the first librarian
- Renamed Mildred L. Terry Public Library in her honor following her retirement in 1981

# 1956

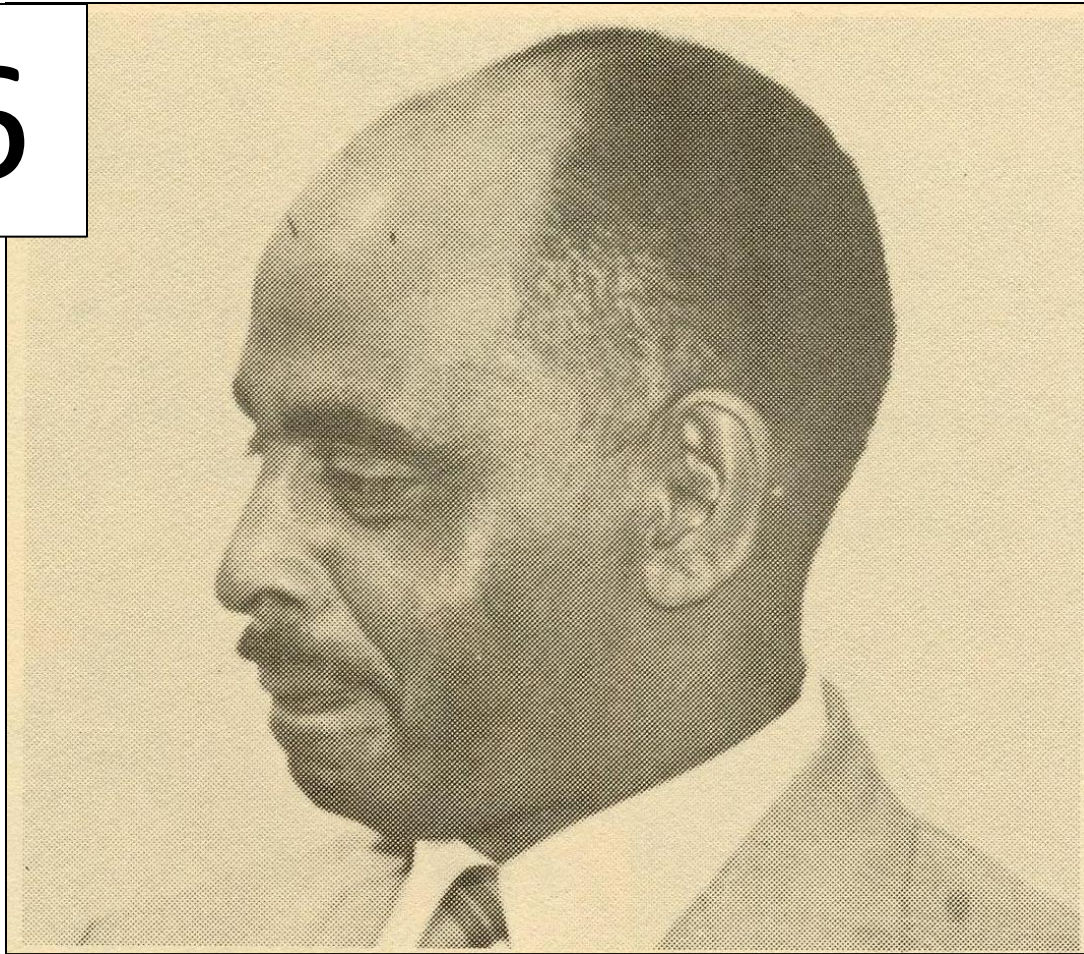


## **Dr. Thomas Hency Brewer, Sr.**

- Opened his medical practice in Columbus in 1920
- Instrumental in establishing the Columbus Chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. in 1939
- Assassinated in February 1956



# 1956



## **E. Edward Farley**

- Prominent Real Estate Developer including Carver Heights Subdivision in 1948
- Assumed leadership of the local chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. upon Brewer's assassination in February 1956
- Died four months later of a heart attack



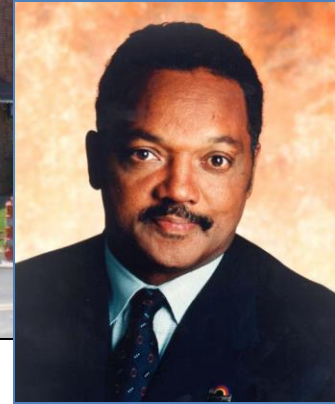
# 1997



## **The Liberty Theater Cultural Center**

- The Liberty Theater was closed in 1974
- Theater was reopened in 1997 following a \$1.6 million dollar renovation
- Provides recreational services and fitness activities for the tri-city community

# 2001



## Reverend Jesse Jackson

- Spoke in Columbus at an event held at Holsey Chapel CME Church in April 2001 with 350 people present
- He is the founder of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, which promotes civil rights and social change